Update on the Accreditation Handbook
April 2010

Overview of this Report
This report provides an update on the work to revise the *Accreditation Handbook* for discussion and input. The item contains one chapter for action by the COA that was updated by staff to reflect the implementation of the revised accreditation system during the 2009-10 year and thereafter. The item also contains two chapters as information for the COA. Finally, the item contains a timeline that shows when each chapter should be brought to the COA for initial review, editing, and adoption.

Staff Recommendation
Staff recommends that the COA discuss and adopt the proposed changes to Chapter Four: Accreditation Cycle and discuss and identify additional changes for Chapter Five: Biennial Reports and Chapter Six: Program Assessment. Staff, furthermore, recommends that the COA direct staff to post the adopted Chapter Four, bring revised versions of Chapters Five and Six and additional updated chapters of the Handbook to the April 2010 COA meeting for approval.

Proposed Changes to One Chapter of the Accreditation Handbook
During the May 2009 COA meeting, members and staff discussed the need to update the *Accreditation Handbook* to reflect the revised accreditation system. The COA directed staff to prepare one or more chapters for COA review and adoption at each subsequent meeting until the entire Handbook was updated and adopted. Edits for Chapter Four were identified that conform the chapter to current accreditation practices so that the chapter will be useful for institutions and accreditation review teams as they prepare for, and participate in an accreditation site visit. Chapter Four provides an overview of the accreditation cycle and its three major activities, the Biennial Reports, Program Assessment, and Site Visit. Chapter Four will be useful to institutional leaders who need an accurate, but summarized description of the accreditation system.

Chapters Five and Six were updated to reflect current practices but neither chapter was carefully edited for readability or completeness. Chapter Five discusses the role, composition of, and review process for biennial reports. Chapter Six discusses the role of Program Assessment and the review and feedback process.

Next Steps
Consistent with directions provided to staff at the May 2009 COA meeting, staff will continue to revise chapters in the *Accreditation Handbook* and will bring proposed revised chapters to the COA for its approval at future COA meetings. The table below shows each chapter of the Accreditation Handbook and when it was or is scheduled to be presented to the COA.

Accreditation Handbook
Review and Adoption by the COA

Italics= Proposed Date
Bold = Adoption Date

	Reviewed by the COA		Adoption by COA
	Information	Action	
Introduction	*5/10*	*6/10*	*6/10*
Chapter One: Responsibilities of the Commission on Teacher Credentialing and the Committee on Accreditation		1/10	**1/10**
Chapter Two: Standards in Accreditation		1/10	**1/10**
Chapter Three: Institutional and Program Approval		8/09	**8/09**
Chapter Four: The Accreditation Cycle	1/10	*4/10*	*4/10*
Chapter Five: Biennial Reports	*4/10*	*5/10*	*5/10*
Chapter Six: Program Assessment	*4/10*	*5/10*	*5/10*
Chapter Seven: Preparation for an Accreditation Site Visit			**6/09**
Chapter Eight: Accreditation Decision Options and Implications	8/09	10/09	**10/09**
Chapter Nine: Activities during the 7th Year of the Accreditation Cycle	10/09	1/10	**1/10**
Chapter Ten: Accreditation Site Visit Team Member Information	10/09	1/10	**1/10**
Chapter Eleven: BIR Member Skills and Competencies	1/10	1/10	**1/10**
Chapter Twelve: Team Leadership	*5/10*	*6/10*	*6/10*
Chapter Thirteen: Articulation between State and National Accreditation	*4/10*	*5/10*	*5/10*
Chapter Fourteen: Evaluation of the Accreditation System	*5/10*	*6/10*	*6/10*
Appendix A: Sample Reports			
Appendix B: Sample Interview Schedule			
Appendix C: Team Report Development Forms			
Appendix D: Evaluation Forms			
Appendix E: Common Standards	Adopted by the Commission		
Appendix F: Experimental Standards	Adopted by the Commission		
Appendix G: Framework	Adopted by the Commission		

Chapter 4
The Accreditation Cycle

Introduction

This chapter provides an overview of the accreditation cycle which is comprised of three major activities. These activities and their purpose are briefly described below. In the following chapters each activity is reviewed in more detail. The underlying expectation of the accreditation process is that all accredited credential programs are engaged in the continuous, on-going collection of data about candidate competence and program effectiveness, are analyzing the data, and are using the results to make programmatic improvements. Taken as a whole, the elements of the accreditation cycle prepare the institution and the accreditation review team to identify an institution's strengths and any areas needing improvement.

I.   Purpose

The overarching goal of the accreditation system is to ensure that educator preparation programs are aligned with the Common Standards which require, among other things, that institutions develop comprehensive data collection systems to support continuous program improvement and to demonstrate candidates' knowledge and skills for educating and supporting all students in meeting the state-adopted academic standards.

Four primary purposes are achieved through the accreditation system. First, the process creates a mechanism by which educator preparation programs, their institutions, and the COA are held accountable to the public and to the education profession. Through participation in the accreditation process, educator preparation programs document their adherence to educator preparation standards and their use of data for on-going analyses of program effectiveness. Second, the cycle supports institutions' adherence to appropriate program standards, generally the CTC-adopted teacher preparation standards. Third, by requiring institutions to use data to identify areas needing improvement, the accreditation process helps ensure high quality educator preparation programs. Fourth, the accreditation cycle encourages institutions to create and utilize systematic and comprehensive evaluation processes to ensure their candidates are well qualified for teaching or specialist services credentials and that their programs are providing the rigorous content and pedagogical preparation new teachers and other educators need to be successful.

II.   Overview

The accreditation process is a seven year cycle of activities. These activities are the biennial reports, program assessment, and the site visit. Each educator preparation institution has been assigned to a cohort. Each cohort is on a specific seven year cycle. The cohort model distributes the workload of the CTC, its staff, and the Board of Institutional Reviewers (BIR), which is composed of trained education professionals who review program documents and conduct the accreditation site visits. A brief overview of each activity will be provided here. For a full description and guidance on preparing for each activity, please see the appropriate chapters.

Biennial Reports

Biennial reports are submitted to the CTC every two to three years. The purposes of the reports are to ensure that institutions are collecting and analyzing candidate and program data on a regular basis and that program improvement activities are being identified based on the results of the analyses. Institutions prepare the biennial reports by collecting and analyzing two to three years of candidate and program data. Submissions occur following years one, three, and five. Each institution identifies one of three due dates on which its submission will be due: August 15, October 15, or December 15.

When writing the report, the institution briefly describes its programs, the number of candidates in each program, the types of programs it runs, and any programmatic changes that have occurred since the last accreditation activity. Each program separately reports candidate and program effectiveness data by presenting the data, analyzing the data, and identifying program strengths and concerns. The reports conclude with an institutional summary and plan of action that describes actions the institution will take to address any concerns identified by the data. Subsequent biennial reports will give the institution an opportunity to report on changes that were implemented as a result of the prior biennial report.

Program Assessment
Program Assessment is the activity during which key program documents are reviewed to determine whether the educator preparation program appears to be aligned to program standards. This activity begins in the fourth year of the accreditation cycle and may require 12-15 months to complete depending on the reviewers' need for more information from the institution.

During an institution's Program Assessment year, each of its educator preparation programs submit documents demonstrating how their program meets the relevant program standards. The program document has three parts. Part One is a narrative describing how the program is meeting each program standard. Part Two includes course syllabi and assignments which provide the evidence to support the narrative in Part One. Part Three describes the procedures used to measure candidate competence, including evidence that those measures are administered in a consistent and equitable manner. Information from Part Three supports the program's Biennial Reports. Each program at an institution may determine whether to submit its document on October, November or December 15.

Pairs of trained BIR members review program documents to determine whether each program is preliminarily aligned with program standards or whether more information is needed to make that determination. Following each round of reviews, the feedback form, the Preliminary Report of Findings, is sent to the program. The Preliminary Report describes which standards are preliminarily aligned with standards and identifies what additional information is needed to make a preliminary determination of other program standards. Institutions are encouraged to provide additional information, if requested, so that the Program Assessment process can be completed in advance of the site visit. Results of the process are used to determine the configuration of the site visit team. For example, if reviewers have determined that additional information is still needed before a program can be found to be preliminarily aligned, an additional person might be assigned to that institution's site visit team who can focus on the program that didn't complete Program Assessment.

Site Visit

The Site Visit takes place in year six of the accreditation cycle. The site visit allows a BIR team to consolidate and verify information from the Biennial Reports and the Program Assessment process for the purpose of making findings about the extent to which an institution and its programs meet the common and program standards and to generate an accreditation recommendation. The team performs interviews with samples of stakeholders from each of an institution's programs and completes limited document reviews to confirm or disconfirm information from the other sources. The team also examines evidence about the institution's policies and practices as they impact educator preparation programs. Based upon the findings of all three activities, an accreditation recommendation is made to the COA.

Institutions are assigned a CTC consultant a year in advance of the site visit in order to help them prepare for the visit. The Administrator of Accreditation works with each institution to establish the visit dates, site team size and configuration. During this time, the institution prepares its Preconditions Report, which describes the institution's context, identifies the standards against which each program was developed, and describes how it satisfies program preconditions and its Common Standards Report, which describes how it satisfies the Common Standards. These documents are sent in advance of the visit to all team members.

In year seven of the accreditation cycle, institutions provide follow up information to the COA as may be required by the COA's accreditation decision.

III.   Cohort Activities

All approved educator preparation sponsors were assigned to one of seven cohorts (which are each named after one color in the light spectrum). As the accreditation system was restarted, each cohort was assigned to complete activities associated with a particular year in the seven year cycle. For example, the Blue cohort is completing year one activities during the 2009-10 year and the Red cohort is in year four of the cycle. Accreditation activities and cohort schedules are summarized in the following charts.

Accreditation Cycle and Activities

	Institution or Program Sponsors		CTC and COA	Accreditation Activities
	At the Institution	Submit to CTC		
Year 1	• Data Gathering & Analysis	Biennial Report[1] Data from Years 6, 7 & 1	Review report	• Biennial Report: Staff review of the report could result in a request for additional information and/or a focused site visit. In addition, institution may be completing follow-up from the site visit in Year 6. All institutions will continue data gathering and analysis annually.
Year 2	• Data Gathering & Analysis			• Data gathering and analysis is on-going at the institution • No report unless there was follow-up from questions generated from the Year 6, 7 and 1 Biennial Report.
Year 3	• Data Gathering & Analysis • Update program documents	Biennial Report[1] Data from Years 2 & 3	Review report	• Biennial Data Report: Staff review of the report could result in a request for additional information and/or a focused site visit.
Year 4	• Submit Program Document(s) • Data Gathering & Analysis	Program Assessment*	Review Assessment Document (s)	• Program reviewers are assigned to review each program's documentation. • Program review teams agree on preliminary findings for program standards and identify additional information needed to form a preliminary finding. • Reviewers identify questions or concerns for the future site team to address.
Year 5	• Data Gathering & Analysis • Prepare Preconditions Report and Common Standards Report	Biennial Report[1] Data from Years 4 & 5	Preliminary Program Review questions for sponsor	• Biennial Report: Staff review of the report could result in a request for additional information and/or a focused site visit. • Program reviewers submit preliminary findings and remaining questions or concerns to the COA, with recommendations for any needed follow-up at the site visit. • COA determines which if any program(s) need to be included in the site visit and notifies institution at least one year prior to the site visit date.
Year 6	• Data Gathering & Analysis • Complete preparations for site visit • Host site visit	Common Standards Report	Conduct Site Visit	• Site team is provided with preliminary findings from program review teams and all previous documentation from this cycle. Team is also provided with prior accreditation team report. • Site team visits the institution reviewing all Common Standards and program(s) identified by the Program Reviews. • Site team submits an accreditation report to COA, with recommendations. • COA makes an accreditation decision and specifies required follow-up if necessary.
Year 7	• Data Gathering & Analysis • Follow-up to site visit if necessary	7th Year Follow-Up Report, if necessary.	Follow-up to site visit, if necessary	• COA reviews follow-up, if warranted, asks further questions. Follow up may exceed one year at the discretion of the COA. • After completing the seven year cycle, the institution begins the cycle again

1 In practice, Biennial Reports are submitted to the CCTC in the Summer or Fall following the end of the last year of data collection, e.g., in Summer or Fall following the end of years 1, 3, and 5.

Accreditation Activities by Cohort
2010-2017

Each institution of higher education and/or program sponsor (institution) is assigned to one of seven cohorts. The chart below indicates the accreditation activities for each cohort over the next 7 years. After the seventh year, the cycle begins again with the same activities as the 2010-2011 year.

Cohort	Red	Orange	Yellow	Green	Blue	Indigo	Violet
2010-2011	Biennial Report (Year 5)	Site Visit (Year 6)	7th Year Follow-Up [1] (Year 7)	Biennial Report (Year 1)	(Year 2)	Biennial Report (Year 3)	Program Assess (Year 4)
2011-2012	Site Visit	7th Year Follow-Up [1]	Biennial Report		Biennial Report	Program Assess	Biennial Report
2012-2013	7th Year Follow-Up [1]	Biennial Report		Biennial Report	Program Assess	Biennial Report	Site Visit
2013-2014	Biennial Report		Biennial Report	Program Assess	Biennial Report	Site Visit	7th Year Follow-Up [1]
2014-2015		Biennial Report	Program Assess	Biennial Report	Site Visit	7th Year Follow-Up [1]	Biennial Report
2015-2016	Biennial Report	Program Assess	Biennial Report	Site Visit	7th Year Follow-Up [1]	Biennial Report	
2016-2017	Program Assess	Biennial Report	Site Visit	7th Year Follow-Up [1]	Biennial Report		Biennial Report

[1] All institutions must address issues, concerns or questions raised during the site visit. The COA may require some institutions to submit a written report to Commission staff detailing the activities completed in the 7th Year Follow-Up.

Induction programs are integrated into the Commission's Accreditation System as of July 1, 2009. Please see the *Accreditation Activities by Cohort-BTSA Induction Programs* for the initial year's accreditation activities.

This is the unofficial working draft of the schedule. All institutions and program sponsors will be notified by the Commission of the upcoming accreditation activities.

Each institution can determine its cohort assignment by consulting the CTC's webpage.

The information will be found at http://www.ctc.ca.gov/educator-prep/program-accred.html.

Chapter Five
Biennial Reports

Introduction

This chapter provides information on the role of biennial reports in the accreditation cycle. An underlying expectation of the accreditation system is that all credential preparation programs are engaged in continuous program improvement that is grounded in the collection and analysis of data about their candidates. The biennial report formalizes that expectation by requiring institutions to submit, on a biennial basis, two years of assessment data that the institution is using to ensure that candidates are developing, and completers have acquired, the appropriate skills and knowledge to prepare them to be professional educators. Ongoing program improvement efforts also require that program effectiveness data is being collected in a comprehensive and systematic way and that, although the Commission on Teacher Credentialing (CTC) requires biennial reports, the institution and its programs collect data at least on an annual basis. Analyses of program effectiveness data are also required to be included in the biennial report.

I. Purpose

The purpose of the biennial report is for every credential preparation program to demonstrate to the CTC how it utilizes candidate, completer, and program data to guide on-going program improvement activities. In addition, the biennial reports help move accreditation away from prior years' "snapshot" approach to a process in which accreditation is on-going. The biennial report process allows for the recognition that effective practice means program personnel are engaged constantly in the process of evaluation and program improvement.

The biennial report includes a section in which the institution can briefly describe its credential preparation programs, summarize the number of candidates and completers in each program, and provide a brief update on changes made to the programs since the last site visit or biennial report was submitted. In addition to candidate and program data, the report also includes a section in which institution leadership will identify trends that were observed across programs and describe institutional plans for remedying concerns identified by the data. Program-specific improvement efforts must align to appropriate common or program standards.

II. Organization and Structure of Biennial Reports

The Biennial Report template may be found on the CTC's website at http://www.ctc.ca.gov/educator-prep/program-accred-biennial-reports.html.

The Biennial Report is comprised of two major parts – Section A and Section B. Each program offered at an institution must complete Section A. For instance, if an institution offers a Multiple Subject program, an Education Specialist program, and a School Nurse program, it must complete three sets of Section A – one for *each* of the three programs. Section B is an overall institutional report that summarizes findings across the institution and identifies any institutional change proposed or planned across programs. Section B must be completed and signed by the unit leader (typically the Dean or Superintendent) and only one Section B is completed by the

institution. Below is additional information about each of these two Sections. The information below is not comprehensive.   Please consult the CTC's webpage on biennial reports (http://www.ctc.ca.gov/educator-prep/program-accred-biennial-reports.html) for more specific and up-to-date information. If questions are still unanswered, contact the CTC consultants assigned to biennial reports.

Section A. Program Specific Information

Section A is comprised of the following four parts: (I.) Contextual Information; (II.) Candidate Assessment, Performance and Program Effectiveness information; (III.) Analysis of Candidate Assessment Data; and (IV.) Use of Assessment Results.   Completion of the entire Section A is intended to be brief, approximately 10 pages per program, and to include only enough narrative to respond to the prompt.

Section A. Part I. Contextual Information. This part of the report asks program sponsors to provide general information to help reviewers understand the program, the context in which it operates (such as multiple sites) including the number candidates and completers or graduates, and what has changed significantly since the CTC approved the current program document.

Section A. Part II.   Candidate Assessment/Performance and Program Effectiveness Information. This part of the report asks program sponsors to submit information on how candidate and program completer performance are assessed and a summary of the data for two academic years. The length of this section depends on the size of the program and how data is reported. The information and data submitted in this section will be used as the basis for the analysis and action plan submitted in Sections III and IV.

This section asks program sponsors the following questions: *What candidate assessment(s) does the program use up to and through recommending the candidate for a credential? What key assessments are used to make critical program improvement decisions?* This section asks program sponsors to describe the various types of data collected (e.g., TPA, portfolios, observations) and the data collection process, and to provide a summary of data (aggregated) for the identified primary candidate assessments. Only aggregated data should be provided; no data on individual candidate performance should be included.

Programs sponsors should provide a brief description of the way the data was collected and describe the structure of the data (e.g., minimum and maximum values of a continuous measure, a four-point rubric used for portfolio information, etc.). The data should be presented in a summary fashion, identifying the minimum and maximum scores, the mean (or other measure of central tendency), and, if the sample size is large, the standard deviation. This information can be reported in a table format or as a chart. The CTC encourages institutions to make good use of tables and appropriate types of charts so that the results of an analysis are clear and obvious and to reduce the need for text.

This part also asks program sponsors the following questions: *What additional information about candidate and program completer performance or program effectiveness is collected and analyzed that informs programmatic decision making? What additional assessments are used to ascertain program effectiveness as it relates to candidate competence?* Programs must identify

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the specific tools or procedures it uses to assess candidates and program completers, describe the types of data collected (e.g. employer data, post program surveys, retention data, other types of data), and describe the data collection process. The program must summarize the data and identify any strengths or weakness that are revealed by the data analysis.

Information prepared for national or professional accrediting bodies may be used for the biennial report as long as the resulting report satisfies requirements of the biennial report.

Section A. Part III. Analyses of Candidate Assessment Data. This part of Section A asks each program to provide an analysis of the data provided in Section A, Part II. It asks program sponsors to identify strengths and areas for improvement that have been identified through the analysis of the data and asks the program sponsor what the analysis of the data demonstrates about: a) candidate competence and b) program effectiveness.

The CTC does not prescribe a particular level of analysis as long as the analyses reported are useful for determining whether or not candidates are developing the appropriate competencies, and for identifying the strengths and weaknesses of the credential program(s). The reports must show that the institution's personnel analyzed the data and used the results to identify programmatic changes and improvements. In general, inclusion of the possible response or score options, the range of responses or scores, the mean (or mode(s)) and standard deviation, along with limited narrative if desired, are sufficient analyses for describing candidate and program information.

Section A. Part IV. Use of Assessment Results to Improve Candidate and Program Performance
This part of Section A asks program sponsors to indicate how they used the data from assessments and analysis of that data to improve candidate and program performance. This could include, but is not limited to, continued monitoring, proposed changes to the program, or collection of additional data to determine the most appropriate course of action. Any proposed changes should be linked to the data that support the modification.

Section B. Institutional Summary
Section B. Institutional Summary and Plan of Action. This section of the Biennial Report addresses all credential programs within an institution. It asks for institutional leadership to indicate trends observed in the data across programs and to identify areas of strength, areas for improvement, and next steps or a plan of action. The summary is signed and submitted by the unit leader: Dean, Director of Education, Superintendent, or Head of the Governing Board of the Program Sponsor. Only one Section B per institution should be provided to the Committee on Accreditation (COA), regardless of how many programs or sites the institution operates.

III.   Review Process for Biennial Reports
Staff Review
Staff reviews the reports 1) for completeness, 2) for the inclusion of candidate data, 3) for the analyses of candidate and program data, and 4) to ensure that the next steps or action plan reflects the data analyses and is aligned with program and common standards. Staff will summarize the information for the COA.

Institutions/Program Sponsors will be notified of receipt and review of the Biennial Report. It is possible that information provided by an institution in a biennial report could reveal a significant concern with the operation or efficacy of a credential program. In such cases, the COA could proceed by requesting additional information from the institution, directing staff to hold a technical assistance meeting with the institution to address the concerns, or scheduling a focused site Biennial Reporting visit to be conducted by members of the Board of Institutional Reviewers (BIR) apart from the regularly scheduled accreditation visit. However, only after an accreditation site visit by a review panel of experts would the institution be subject to stipulations or denial of accreditation.

Use by Review Teams
When an institution submits documents for program assessment (year 4 of the accreditation cycle) and when preparing for a site visit (year 6 of the cycle), the biennial reports will be sent to the appropriate review team to provide them with a more comprehensive representation of the institution's activities over time. It will be used by these review teams as another source of information upon which standards findings and accreditation recommendations may be based. Findings on standards and accreditation recommendations may not be based solely on information provided in biennial reports.

COA Review
On an annual basis, CTC staff will present a summary of the biennial reports that were completed during the preceding year. In addition to this annual review, if information provided by an institution in a biennial report reveals a possible significant concern with the operation or efficacy of a credential program, staff may bring this situation to the attention of the COA. The COA can take appropriate action *(see Staff Review)*.

Commission Review
Summary information about the biennial report process each year will be included in the Annual Report on Accreditation submitted by the COA to the CTC each year.

IV.   Additional Information and Questions about Biennial Reports
Provided below is some additional information related to Biennial Reports. For additional, and up-to-date information, consult the CTC's website at: http://www.ctc.ca.gov/educator-prep/program-accred-biennial-reports.html

Admissions data – The biennial reports should include only data for candidates already enrolled in educator preparation programs or program completers/graduates. Admissions data should not be included.

Candidate level data – The Biennial Report is focused on aggregated data. Program Sponsors should not submit candidate level data.

Combined reports – In appropriate circumstances and with appropriate disclosure, program reports can be combined. If an institution operates two programs that are very similar but differ slightly in coursework or field experience, it would be acceptable for the institution to combine

these two programs into a single biennial report. Programs may combine Section A responses as long as there is significant commonality within the programs. However, the institution must include a brief statement that clarifies which programs are represented in the data and a brief statement of the similarities and differences in program structure (a rationale for why the institution chose to combine the reporting of the data).

Multiple Sites - An institution must submit one biennial report Section A for each approved credential program it operates. This means that if a program is offered at different sites, the data must be aggregated across all sites for analysis and inclusion in the biennial report. Accreditation looks at the institution as a whole and all its programs together. The biennial reporting process is no different in approach. The location of all programs will be noted in Section A of the report.

National or Professional Organizations - Information prepared for national or professional accrediting bodies may certainly be used for the biennial report as long as the resulting report satisfies requirements of the biennial report.

Programs Not Currently Operating – These programs may submit a modified biennial report. Using the biennial template, please identify the program and then, in Section A.I., indicate that the program is not currently operating.

Programs with Few Candidates- Programs with very small enrollments (less than 10) should report aggregated data as long as student identification cannot be inferred by the data. When feasible, these programs might wish to combine data from more than one year into one analysis to gain a better measure of student growth towards competency. This method would not be appropriate if significant programmatic changes had been made between the different cohorts.

Report Template – The CTC provides a standard template for all program sponsors to use in submitting their biennial report. Program sponsors may combine sections of the report or submit information in a different order than what is set forth in the template, so long as the biennial report submitted includes all the information requested in the directions and in the CTC template. For example, a program sponsor may wish to discuss a data source, analyze that data source, and report on next steps before moving on to a second key assessment. This would likely still meet the CTC's expectations as long as all the requirements are included.

Chapter Six
Program Assessment

Introduction

This chapter provides an overview of the Program Assessment process, which occurs during year four of the Accreditation Cycle. The Program Assessment documents include updated versions of the program documents submitted to gain initial approval to operate an educator preparation program, course syllabi, and documentation about assessments used by the institution to ensure that all candidates recommended for a credential have satisfied the appropriate knowledge and skill requirements. This chapter will be of interest to staff of institutional sponsors preparing for the Program Assessment document submission.

I.   Purposes of Program Assessment

Program Assessment takes place in year four of the accreditation cycle and examines each approved credential program individually. It is the feature of the accreditation system that allows trained BIR members the opportunity to review each approved educator preparation program and determine whether the programs are preliminarily aligned to the relevant standards--either approved California program standards, Experimental Program Standards, or National or Professional Program Standards. Results from the Program Assessment process inform the Site Visit that will take place in year 6 of the accreditation cycle.

II.   Program Assessment Documentation

A Program Assessment document is submitted for each approved preparation program offered by the institution. Each program can chose its submission date, either October, November or December 15. There are three parts to the Program Assessment document.

Part I—Meeting Each Standard

Part I is the narrative response to the current program standards, that is, how the program is meeting each of the program standards. There are several ways that an institution could write this section. In the preparation of Part I, those writing the responses must remember that re-phrasing the standard does not provide information on **how** the program is meeting the standard. Each program's response may be unique in how it meets the standards because the program was developed to reflect the institution's mission, needs of the surrounding area, philosophical beliefs, etc. Therefore, the response to each standard should clearly and succinctly state how the program is meeting all parts of the standard.

Part II—Course Syllabi

Part II includes current course syllabi as well as updated vitae for program faculty. The purpose of including course syllabi in the Program Assessment document is to provide readers with the evidence that links the narrative response to the program's current practices. If a program claims that any or all of a standard is met in a course, readers should be able to substantiate that claim by finding evidence in the course objectives, schedule, assignments, readings and other information noted in the course syllabi.

If the institution uses a particular form as a template or course outline that is required as the core of each course, it may submit that one course outline in the Program Assessment document.

However, if each instructor designs their section of the course on their own, institutions must include each course syllabus for all courses taught in the two years prior to Program Assessment. Reviewers will need to read each one in order to substantiate the claims made in the narrative.

Part III—Assessment Information
Part III is the documentation that supports the program's Biennial Reports. It includes assessments that are used to determine candidate competence, including rubrics, training information and calibration activities that the program reports on in the Biennial Report.

For programs reporting data from the TPA (Cal TPA, PACT or FAST models), there is no need to give the background on the development of the examination, validity and reliability information, etc. However, it is important to note how assessors are trained in the particular area, how often the scoring is calibrated, and the information particular to the location for how the TPA is administered.

For other programs, it will be necessary to give more comprehensive information about the assessments used. If observation forms are used to measure candidate competence, the standards or rationale on which they're based must be identified. Programs must describe how they ensure that all assessors are using institution-made assessments in the same way. Programs must also describe the training and practice that are provided to assessors to ensure a common scoring technique.

Part III will include only those assessments used at key points in the program in order to determine whether candidates are ready to move to the next step or need remediation. Examples of these assessments might be those used to determine when and if candidates are ready to assume fieldwork, how well candidates do in fieldwork, and when candidates can be recommended for the credential.

III. Review of Program Assessment Documents

The Program Assessment document will be reviewed by trained members of the Board of Institutional Reviewers (BIR) who have expertise in the program area. The reviewers will also have access to the biennial reports that have been submitted in this accreditation cycle. Reviewers will be looking for the following:

- Does the narrative describe **how** the standard is met?
- Does the implementation, as described, meet the standard?
    - That is, if there are key phrases in the standard, such as "multiple systematic opportunities to" or "candidates demonstrate in the field," has the program demonstrated **how** it meets each key phrase within the standard?
- Does the evidence substantiate the claims made in the narrative?

As the reviewers read, they are to determine if the standard is preliminarily met or if more information is needed. If more information is needed, they are to write clearly and specifically

what additional information is needed and how it relates to one of the points above. For example, is more information needed on how the standard is met? Or, is evidence to support the narrative needed?

Once the reviewers have completed their work, a Preliminary Report of Findings review form will be sent by CTC staff to the institution. The institution will be encouraged to submit the additional information to ensure that the Program Assessment process is completed before the site visit begins. After the institution has submitted the additional information, the same reviewers will be asked to revisit the document and determine whether the additional information supports a finding that a standard is preliminarily aligned. The updated Preliminary Report of Findings will be sent by CTC staff to the institution and will identify any additional information that is still needed. This dialogue between institution and reviewers may continue until about 4-6 months before the site visit. If there are questions or concerns that have not been resolved when the Program Assessment process concludes, the COA may direct the accreditation manager to include an additional member on the site visit team who can focus exclusively on the program.

The format of the feedback will provide information regarding each program standard, using a form similar to the one below:

<p align="center">**Program Assessment Preliminary Report**</p>

Institution

Date of initial review feedback

Subsequent dates of review

General Comments:

Status	Standard
Preliminarily Aligned	**Standard 1:** Program Design *Questions, Comments, Additional Information Needed*: If Preliminarily Aligned, no additional questions maybe asked.
OR	**Program Standard 2:** Collaboration in Governing the Program *Questions, Comments, Additional Information Needed:* A note to the Site Visit team may be used to focus team members on specific evidence or questions to ask at the site visit.
More information Needed	**Standard 3:** Relationships Between Theory and Practice *Questions, Comments, Additional Information Needed*: Identify the part(s) of the standard for which more information is needed

Additional Information
Additional information regarding Program Assessment is available on the Commission website at http://www.ctc.ca.gov/educator-prep/program-accred-assessment.html. Those who are preparing Program Assessment documents may also contact Commission staff for technical assistance.